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Company Secret An Interview with Louis Wolf

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Along with Philip Agee, Ellen Ray, William H. Schaap, Karl Van Meter, and Stewart Klepper, Louis Wolf is co-editor of the books *Dirty Work: The CIA in Western Europe* and *Dirty Work 2: The CIA in Africa*, as well as the magazine *CovertAction Information Bulletin*. In them he has named names of covert CIA agents. Moderates and those on the right label Wolf "extreme" and "intemperate," but he also is ostracized by some on the left who claim he jeopardizes the lives of the covert agents whose covers he has blown. Below, Louis Wolf tells why he names names and analyzes what the CIA does and why they are doing it.

TWBR: *Those opposed to CIA whistle-blowing have singled out the staff of CovertAction Information Bulletin in particular for attack. Why?*

WOLF: I think it is fair to say we have been singled out not because of any untruthfulness of what we have published or written or have said in public speeches, but because the CIA

and its friends in Congress and in the media perceive us as a threat to their hold over the national security apparatus. I can't believe that four people in a small office in the National Press Building in Washington, D.C. could be such a tremendous threat to an organization with a multibillion dollar budget, 30,000 employees, and the unlimited resources of the government. It is obvious that the CIA wants to widen the wall of secrecy that has always surrounded it since its inception in 1947. Surely, the exposures that have been made about its illegal operations around the world as well as in the United States have caused a lot of embarrassment for the CIA and its friends. Anyone who meaningfully challenges that organization is bound to come in for attack. There are many others who have published articles in other journals who are also under attack.

TWBR: *Philp Agee toward the end of his book Inside the Company: CIA Diary wrote that the CIA had bugged his typewriter. How closely are you being watched?*

WOLF: You have this edition? (Louis Wolf picks up from his desk a Penguin copy of Agee's book, which has on the cover a photograph of a typewriter whose battered, torn case reveals hidden electronic circuitry.) That photograph is not a mock-up by Penguin Books. The typewriter is for real.

TWBR: *Do you think your phone is tapped?*

WOLF: We don't think, we know so. For instance on several occasions we've overheard on the phone people talking about our conversations or we've overheard recordings of conversations we have had either the day before or the same day. Were the CIA, the National Security Agency, and FBI not bugging our phone we would be wondering if we were doing a very good job. That's not to say we are happy about it or that we accept it.

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TWBR: *Then the reforms of the past few years haven't changed such practices?*

WOLF: They've admitted that there are still wiretaps and mail openings of a number of people and organizations. We've found again and again that whatever they've admitted to, you can multiply many times over. For those who talk now about wanting to "unleash the CIA," it's our view that while the CIA claims that they haven't been able to do all that they would have liked to have done in the past few years, to say that they've been "leashed" is ludicrous.

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